LOUIS ZALK
P. O. BOX 647
OJAI, CALIFORNIA

Mar 5th 1958

To Mr Charlotte Kellogg

- our very dear friend: It is so nice + dear of you to thankfully thank us for the oranges - we waited patently for the ripening of the new crop - we hope they preformed as well behaved Oranges should + for the honor of Ojai -

I cannot say we are leading a quiet life - there are whirling currents of activity connected with our School - and our lands on the eastern slopes of the Valley - the government is building a dam + our land is in the picture - but we will have water - something which seemed impossible a few years ago - I have also the duty of offering my experience to my associates in the Steel business - Allah has ordained that I am still enmeshed - more likely it was some nervous decision at a fateful crossroad in the past - but Allah is all merciful in that my health can bear it - and whenever Kubla Khan decrees a stately pleasure dome - he does need steel - so!

I do hope you + Jean are in good health + that we will have the real pleasure of greeting you soon

With affectionate regards which I assure you are alive beyond the words ——

Erma + Louis

Mrs. Louis Zalk
P.O. Box 647
Ojai, California

May 12, 1958

Dear Jean:

I have your card and it is always good to hear from you.

We had hoped to be up there before this - yet it has been a busy winter and even now, we find it difficult to make plans ahead — although we hope to be there in August.

However, our good friends living next to us, James and Anne Vigevano - are

Taking Rajagopal to San Francisco - and they plan to stop over May 31st (or 30th) to Monday morning - En route. I think you have met them. He is an art dealer of the French Impressionists, particularly.

We are so sorry not to have seen you and your lovely mother since Christmas. Please give her our particular love. We miss her and you

With affectionate greetings

Ernie

Champagne

Mrs. Louis Zalk

P.O. Box 647 Ojai, California

November 1, 1958

Dear Jean:

First of all, we send love to Charlotte Kellogg and Jean and hope that all is well with them.

We have returned from our journey to Minnesota and Chicago - (other worlds.) and since then, life here seems so full of activity that we are just getting readjusted.

Our friends, Prof & Mrs Tyler were here as guests, and Lili Kraus is staying with Rosalind - so we gave

a party for forty-two — and had an enjoyable musical evening. Lili has also given two concerts at the HUS — always an inspiration to hear her play. She will be with us until January. I believe that she is to give three concerts in the Bay Region — the week of November 16th —. Tentatively, Rosalind may go to Carmel the following week.

Our flight west from Chicago was through a cloudless sky. and hence visability was very good. What a vast country!

Ojai is very beautiful now that the warm days are over.

The enclosed check is due today.

We often think of both of you — and hope it will not be too long before we are able to see you up there. And until then,

much love,

Yours
Erna and Louis

LOUIS ZALK
P. O. BOX 647
OJAI, CALIFORNIA

December 15, 1958

Mrs. Charlotte Kellogg and Jeanne
Route 1, Box 101
Carmel, California

Dear Mrs. Kellogg and Jeanne:

We were happily surprised at receiving the gift of the pine candle. It will make a very beautiful and fragrant addition to our Christmas party. The Slosses are coming down and of course the little Slosses will be very much around.

We are quite lonesome at times for Carmel and our particular location surrounded by those lovely trees and in constant sight of the ocean. It is not easy to forget those ancient gnarled stones shaped in varied fantasies, holding a seemingly perpetual, unresolved argument with the waves. When I stood looking at them, it seemed to me that they have seen the birth of Time itself and that they will be still there when Time gets weary and melts into the nothingness from which it came. I repeat--those stones are hard to forget. They are so grim, and yet have a lofty, kindly tolerance towards the star-eyed flowers which cling trustingly to their rugged bosom. And one is also haunted by the call of the gulls, holding some sort of political conventions on those stones.

You can see that this feeling will soon cause Erma and me to journey up north, but let it not be forgotten that we will be very happy indeed to see you.

We hope you are in good health and when we come up, we will feel like having some sort of a celebration.

I have been very, very much occupied. There have been trips to Minnesota, Chicago, and many journies to Los Angeles. Fortunately or unfortunately, I am deeply involved in business and also in the affairs at Ojai. That little place is a hive of activity. All we need is to become a headquarters for the United Nations, and then surely the cup will run over.

We appreciate very much hearing from you and I pause now to be sure that what I am sending you are really affectionate regards. Be sure that Erma joins fully.

With affectionate regards,

Louis

Louis Zalk

LZ:lvp

Mrs. Louis Zalk
P.O. Box 647
Ojai, California

Saturday —

Dear Jean: —

We are very happy that you and your Mother are willing to have us all, for a year as your guests at the cottage and Rosalind can make all the arrangements with you when she is there. We are looking forward to being there now and then, since we both have felt much better since our return.

and you can imagine that we have been very busy since our return. We leave next Tuesday for the East and Expect to return in about a month.

The Rosses are here for this weekend and we are having them, the Rajagopals, Franklin and Gladys Lacey — and the Sidney Englishs from Australia for dinner tonight — So the days are full of activity.

Mrs. Louis Zalk
P.O. Box 647
Ojai, California

Would you please give our special love to your mother. and thank you for your very nice letter.

Louis joins me in sending our best to you.

affectionately,

Erma

SANTA BARBARA BILTMORE
HOTEL AND COTTAGES
MONTECITO SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA

Aug 1, 1959

Dear Jean:

The enclosed is the usual quarterly until November first.

We do miss seeing your mother and you although we know Rosalind has been enjoying being with you. And we are being refreshed by the ocean breezes at this place - which is also near Ojai, but a forty-five minute drive there. This past week we were in Los Angeles, where it was very hot.

It does not seem likely that we will be able to go north before our return from Duluth, and (perhaps. New York) in September, October, However, one cannot really tell.

We send our love to you and your Mother. Your affectionate friends

Erma + Louis

"EVERYTHING IN STEEL"

ZALK-JOSEPHS CO.



Phone RA 7-5081 **Duluth, Minnesota**

June 28, 1961

Mrs. James Dickie
Route 1, Box 101
Carmel, California

Dear Jean:

I enclose a check for $1050. for the three month rental period beginning July 1st. Erma and I are here for a longer time than I expected because of the many business problems which must be solved. It would seem that living in this kind of a civilization, problems are a constant stream, but in the present case it is rather a crossroad for me so I do not want to set a definite time for our return but will stay until I am satisfied that no more can be accomplished by my being here.

This brings me to the thought that our visit to Carmel will have to take place when we are able to come. I rather think that Rosalind will spend quite some time at Carmel during August. Our home at Ojai is undergoing considerable reconstruction. We are opening up the south wall so that we can have the full use of our former porch as part of our living room. We are also putting in an air conditioning system.

I deeply regret that our occupancy of the lovely place at Carmel is problematical as after October the 1st and I only advise you this much in advance so that you can have ample time to contact a suitable tenant (that is, if you wish to do so). By suitable I mean one who would appreciate the place and be very careful to blend into its spirit of peace and harmony, as well as being the kind of people you would wish near you. Please do not consider that in this Erma and I are removing ourselves from the warm current of affection that exists between us. When our Ojai construction is finished you will be among those who will be invited to come down and visit us; also, we intend to visit Carmel.

Always with affectionate regards,

Louis

LZ/n
enc.

LOUIS ZALK
P. O. BOX 38
OJAI, CALIFORNIA

December 7, 1961

My dear Jim,

I have your letter of the 2nd, and it is a very wholesome and a happy experience that your letter bring us, as it were, in the circle of your lovely home, and we are interested in all the changes you have made in planting, etc.

We will be quite happily excited when there is a fortunate outcome in all the work you have done on your book.

I can well guess how deeply saddened you were at the death of the little cat. She lived to a good old age and had the privilege of a lot of affection, and at the last went the way of all which has form. I can understand why Jean was so deeply effected by it, but the large and unknowable Wisdom behind all things decrees "the waxing and waning of all form", and there is hardly a doubt that all that has life comes back out of the silence and again rejoices even as do "the morning stars."

We are very happy that it is in the back of your mind to visit us, and it is also in the back of our mind and heart to visit Carmel again. I am weighed down with many responsibilities and tasks. I do not suffer from them or resent them--I just have to acquit myself in the right way and be strong.

We are very pleased with the way our house has turned out, and we know it will be a pleasant surprise to you when you see the finished job.

We send you both our deep affection and remain,

As ever,

Louis

Mr. James Dickie
R. 1, Box 101
Carmel, California

LOUIS ZALK
P. O. BOX 38
OJAI, CALIFORNIA

Dear Jean –

Enclosed find another copy of 'the Return' – there is a 6th line 1st verse left out on copy I sent — the line should read

'Throbbing with a Yearning Quite unutterable'

my next address will be at Hotel Kenilworth till approximately July 12th –

Love to you + Jim

Louis

THE RETURN

"SO HE DROVE OUT THE MAN AND HE PLACED
AT THE EAST OF THE GARDEN OF EDEN
CHERUBIMS, AND A FLAMING SWORD
WHICH TURNED EVERY WAY, TO KEEP THE
WAY OF THE TREE OF LIFE."
- GENESIS CHAP. 3 - 24

LONG HAVE I HUNGERED FOR A VOICE TO SING,
A VOICE TO SMITE MY SOUL'S CHAINED MELODY
TO UTTERANCE OF ITS FLOWERS AND TEARS,
FOR LIKE A HARP LONG SILENT LAID
WITHIN THE TOMB OF SOME DEAD POET KING
THROBBING WITH A YEARNING ~~ALL~~ UNUTTERABLE
HAVE I BEEN MUTE, DISCONSOLATE,
COMPANIONED ONLY BY A FADED WREATH
LEFT BY HANDS LONG WITHERED INTO DUST.

x Quite unutterable,

FOR IN THE EARLY DAWN
OF LIFE'S CONFUSED TUMULTUOUS ADVENTURE
A HARSH AND GROTESQUE CHANCE
FORCED ON MY HEART THE UNENDURABLE,
SO THAT THE SUN SHONE AS THROUGH ASHES
AND THE STARS AS FITFUL BLURS OF LIGHT.
AND SO A QUESTION DRUMMED UPON THE CHAOS OF MY MIND:
MUST MAN FOREVER SUP WITH HOPE AND FEAR
SUBJECT TO A WANTON BLIND AND OFT MALEFIC CHANCE
THAT EVER-CARELESS DEALS OUT WEAL AND WOE?
OR MIGHT THERE BE A KEY TO FREEDOM AND TO LIGHT?

THEN AT LAST A SEARING FLASH REVEALED
THAT WHAT CAN BE LOST
IS AS ALREADY LOST,
AND WHAT CAN BE GAINED
IS DUST, THAT FOR A FLEETING MOMENT
TAKES ON THE GARMENT OF A BEAUTEOUS FLOWER.
THE LEAVES FALL OFF AND PRISTINE NAKEDNESS REMAINS.

THEN NAUGHT WAS LEFT BUT THIS
TO STRUGGLE UPWARD THROUGH A LONG AND BITTER NIGHT,
GROPING IF THERE BE A PURPOSE
OR A MEANING TO IT ALL.
AND IF BEYOND THE DARKNESS SHINES A QUENCHLESS FLAME
THAT LIGHTS A WAY TO PEACE AND DIGNITY FOR MAN
SO HE BE FREE OF SORROW, MASTER OF HIS FATE,
CLAIM HIS HERITAGE IN THE EVERLASTING,
AND REJOICING, SHARE IN THE EVER-REBORN CYCLES OF CREATION.

THE RETURN --

BUT IN SUCH A QUEST AS THIS
ONE MUST CHURN WITHIN THE VITRIOL OF TRUTH
TILL FANCIES AND ILLUSIONS DIE
AND ONLY TRUTH REMAINS,
WEALTH AND ASHES MUST BE DEEMED ALIKE,
WORLDLY HONORS SEEN AS DRY LEAVES
BLOWN OUTWARD BY A WINTER WIND,
AND OPULENCE OF KNOWLEDGE BUT A FIREFLY
GLEAMING FAINTLY ON THE BREAST OF COSMIC NIGHT.

THEN IN AN AGONIZING STEEP ASCENT
I PERFORCE MUST WRESTLE WITH THAT ANGEL
WHO, WITH STUBBORN STRENGTH
DOES EVER GUARD THE TREE OF LIFE UNDYING--
THE TREE WHEREIN THERE IS A DEATHLESS FLAME
LEAPING UPWARD FROM A CORE BEYOND ALL THOUGHT,
THE VERY HEART OF THAT WHICH WAS
AND IS, OR EVER CAN BE,
REVEALING THEN TO EYES THAT TRULY SEE
THE RIDDLE OF LIFE,
THE MYSTERY OF DEATH.

SO WITH STRENGTH DRAWN FROM FATHOMLESS ALONENESS
AND REJECTING THEN ALL BRIDGES OF RETREAT,
ALL FEARS AND ALL DEFENSES,
I SURGED FORWARD NOW AS MIGHTY AS THE ANGEL
WHO SEEING THIS THEN LET ME THROUGH IN PEACE
TO STAND AT LAST BEFORE THAT RADIANT FLAME
HOLY AND UNDYING, BRILLIANT AND INEFFABLE,
UNMOVED AMID THE RESTLESS SHADES
THAT IN THE DARKNESS COME AND GO--
A FLAME WHICH ONCE BEHELD
MOVES THEN TO DWELL FOREVER IN THE ONE
WHO IN ITS PRESENCE DARES TO STAND.

THERE WAS THEN A GREAT STILLNESS,
A HEALING OF ALL OPEN WOUNDS,
A PEACE AND WONDER BEYOND ALL THOUGHT.
THE LINGERING SHADOWS OF MY MIND
FELL ONE BY ONE INTO THEIR NATIVE DARKNESS.

THE RETURN --

SO NOW I BEAR MY BURDENS
KNOWING WELL THAT ANY TASK NOT BORN OF LOVE
MUST EVER BE A BURDEN,
AND I WILL FACE WHATEVER GRIEF MAY COME
AS MY PORTION OF THE WORLD'S DEEP SORROW
AND KNOW COMPASSION IN THE SILENT TOUCH WITH THOSE WHO MOURN
FOR COMPASSION IS THE OPEN GATE TO LOVE.
NOT LOVE AS JUST A WORD TOO LIGHTLY USED,
BUT THE VERY FLOWER OF MERCY
IN UNDERSTANDING'S PURE EMBRACE.

SO THOSE WHO WISH TO GATHER
LET THEM GATHER UNTO SATED WEARINESS,
AND THOSE WHO EVER MUST REJECT
LET THEM REJECT WITHIN THEIR CORNER OF PATHETIC DUST;
THE VOICE OF THOSE WHO SCOFF MUST SOON BE STILL,
THE MULTITUDE'S DERISION AS QUICKLY PASSES
AS DO THE TRANSIENT THINGS THEY VALUE MOST;-
AND THOSE WHO SEEK POWER
LET THEM STORM UP THROUGH THEIR TORTUOUS WAY
AND AT THE LAST IN GRANDEUR LIE ENTOMBED
IN SOME DARK SARCOPHAGUS
EMBLAZONED WELL WITH HERALDRY AND POMP.
AND THOSE WHO SEEK THE CANOPY OF HOLINESS
LET THEM STRIVE AND FIND THEIR GOAL,
PERCHANCE A COLORED IMAGE ON SOME SACRED WINDOW;

BUT I EXULTANT RIDE
UPON A TIDE SO VAST
IT KNOWS NO SHORE AND SEEKS NO REST,
A TIDE WHICH CHANGELESSLY DECREES
THE WAXING AND THE WANING OF ALL FORM,
FROM MOTES ATREMBLE IN THE BREEZE
TO GIANT SUNS OBEDIENT TO ITS LAW
SO WISDOM, ROBED IN GARMENTS OF THE SELF,
IS HUMBLED INTO SILENCE
AND SINKS FOREVER IN THE FATHOMLESS.

SO FOR ME THERE IS NAUGHT TO DO
SAVE WHEN THE FLAME WITHIN MY HEART
BIDS ME VOICE ITS SONG THROUGHOUT THE WILDERNESS
AND BE FOREVER ONE MORE WITNESS TO ITS TRUTH.

- LOUIS ZALK

LOUIS ZALK
P. O. BOX 38
OJAI, CALIFORNIA

One must not argue the problem of Immortality with the limited and trivial imagery of the mind. Immortality, that which is not born and therefore is not subject to death is an Experience, beyond thought. It is an experience of the timeless — an experience in the glory of the imperishable an experience of "Being" as a creative force ever renewing Itself.

In this "Experience" there is no problem. This "Creative Being"! is it not veritably the burning bush that burns but never is consumed? Is it not therefore in its Essence incapable of submergence in what we in our mind think of as death? Is "It" in its transcendant freedom, if we can comprehend a shadow of its Truth — life and death of the vehicle are one and the same thing.

The mind must then, even in its inadequate groping arise to the question — Is not this transcendant + Creative flame, latent within us, also capable of fashioning for Itself a dwelling place "Eternal in the heavens." Is not This the true resurrection and the Life? Not at some future time — but here and now?

The words of the Christ and others of the great Teachers of mankind - are not merely words. They are great flames shining in the darkness. Standing in gratitude before those lights - the shadows generated by the mind fall away - and the latent Flame establishes its own radiance - to shine forever, beyond the shores of time - To be as one of the "morning stars that shout for joy" as they partake in the rapturous symphonies of Endless creation.

November 27, 1964

Mrs. Louis Zalk
Besant Drive
Ojai, California

Dear Erma:

How good of you to write us a letter telling us of the hours preceding Louis' release. As you say, he would never have wished to be inactive, and I feel sure that this was the spiritual moment predestined and earned, for indeed both Jim and I feel that Louis had an exceedingly spiritual personality, and that both of you were in touch with whatever destinies and forces guide our lives.

In fact, after my Mother's death, it was Louis who widened my horizon and explained to me some speculations on the nature of the development of the individual spiritual energy that had been released. You, too, dear Erma, understand these things, and both Jim and I feel that your help and Louis' help at certain critical times in our lives have been spiritually important. As you know, this goes back to my mother's lifetime. We do hope that you have rested a bit and will carry on a full as well as contemplative life. We think of you a great deal.

James asked me to tell you that he felt a deep affection and gratitude for the understanding Louis tendered him and the help he gave us both after our marriage.

As for myself, I, too, had a special affection and inspiration as a result of this wonderful friendship which has left such a constructive legacy in my life. The influence of personality is a wonderful thing and keeps bearing creative results.

As you know, Jim and I went to New York, and after that I went back again to Iowa to attend Mr. Hoover's services, and when I returned James had to go into the hospital for a checkup. The doctors say he is fine and can look forward to a good life.

We have made a major move to consolidate that life for both of us; for we need all our physical strength and time now for our creative work, and the point was such a tremendous drain on our energies that I felt it was unwise to continue there much longer. I consulted with my mother's sister who said she had felt the same way for some time. We have moved to a drier, warmer climate up the Carmel Valley where we have a splendid view and a fine new studio for me. It is also near James's studio. There is much less work, and our lives are quite concentrated. The Point is on the market and in the hands of some very reliable agents who are advertising it throughout the country. Jim's mother who is 84 is in a delightful guest house on our property near my new studio.

Dear Erma, I don't suppose you will be coming this way; but, if you are passing by the region, we would love to come to the airport or station and bring you up for a visit. In the meantime, please take care of yourself. Give our dearest love to Rosalind and tell her I'll write when the pressure of moving and settling is over.

This letter is being typed by Mrs. Koebig of whom you knew and she asked to extend to you her deepest sympathy and tell you what a real pleasure and inspiration it was to have hada the privilege of knowing your husband.

Love,

December 22, 1964

MRS. LOUIS ZALK • BESANT DRIVE, ROUTE 3 • OJAI, CALIFORNIA

Dear Jean and Jim!

Thank you for your very good letter of November 27th and now the nice card.

I have had so many letters to write – and so many things to take care of that I waited to answer until I had time. Perhaps it is good to be busy.

I note that you have a new address. I hope it will be what you wish for.

Life changes, and we have to change with the flowing stream and I suppose that beautiful "Point" will have another chapter to tell.

I sincerely hope that your new home will be a happy one for you both.

We were planning to drive north and stop over at Carmel to surprise you. Now, I do not know when that will be.

Rosalind Expects Lili Kraus here with her daughter on January 9th and I believe

MRS. LOUIS ZALK • BESANT DRIVE, ROUTE 3 • OJAI, CALIFORNIA

the plan is ~~that~~ Lili is to play at Berkeley Jan 17th — or thereabouts. I may join them at that time

Jim Sloss's parents are here and Rosalind & I will join them at Radha's over the weekend.

Whenever you come South you are always welcome here if you will let me know. More or less, I intend to stay home. There is much to do

in going over files, etc. -
and I do Enjoy our home
here -

Much love to both of
you.

Emma

MRS. LOUIS ZALK
BESANT ROAD, OJAI, CALIFORNIA

May 1, 1965

Dear Jean and Jim:

I have lost your address. but I suppose this will reach you.

Thank you for the Easter card. It was good of you to remember. It seems so long since I have heard of you - and always remember the lovely days at the "Point"

I can hardly believe that six months have gone by since Louis left us

There has been so much to do, so many letters to write, so many decisions to make, so many unexpected things turning up. Yet, keeping so busy has been good for me, it has kept my mind active. Of course, I miss Louis a great deal. But also he seems to be very near at times.

You are always welcome when you come South. It would be nice to see you.

much love, Erma

LOUIS ZALK

TRIANGLE Steel & Supply Co.
P. O. BOX 58262, VERNON BRANCH
LOS ANGELES 58, CALIFORNIA

VIA AIR MAIL

SOLILOQUY

I SHALL BE AS A WITHERED LEAF,
BY A CARELESS WIND BLOWN EVERYWHERE AND NOWHERE.
I SHALL BE AS A FADED FLOWER,
BANISHED FROM MY GOLDEN CRYSTAL VASE.
I SHALL DROP INTO A PROFOUND NOTHINGNESS--
SO THEY SAY.
BUT MAY IT NOT BE THE NOTHINGNESS
FROM WHICH I CAME?
IS IT NOT THE SAME NOTHINGNESS
FROM WHICH YOU AND I
AND ALL THINGS IN THEIR INFINITE VARIETY
AND EVEN ALL SUNS AND WORLDS HAVE COME?
MAY IT NOT BE THEN A BOUNDLESS FULLNESS
WHICH HAS HAD SO MUCH TO PUT FORTH,
WHICH STILL KEEPS POURING OUT INCREDIBLE WONDERS
EVEN UNTO LIMITLESS HORIZONS?

MUST I THEN BE TANGLED IN SPECIFIC CAUSES
WITH CAUSES PRIOR EVEN TO THE SEED?
DOES NOT THE CHAIN OF CAUSES LEAD RELENTLESSLY
FROM IMPENETRABLE MYSTERY--
FROM THE PRIMAL FIRE MIST
THROUGH AEONS OF TIME BEYOND MEASURE
THROUGH CHANGES AND CATASTROPHIC TORRENTS
APPROACHING FORMS OF PERFECTION
SET TO MIGHTY MUSIC?
MAY IT NOT BE THE DREAM OF A GOD WHO SLEPT
AND NOW AWAKENS FROM HIS DREAM?

WHAT WAS IT THEN IN THE BEGINNING
THAT BROODED O'ER THAT MIGHTY INCANDESCENT SPIRAL?
DID IT THEN HOLD YOU AND ME
UNBORN, BUT CHERISHED SAFELY IN ITS BOSOM?
HAS IT CARRIED US SUCH LONG DISTANCES
THROUGH SO MANY CHANGES--OBSTACLES AND DANGERS
TO AT THE LAST, THROW US
ON SOME RUBBISH HEAP OF TIME?

PERHAPS IT MAY LET US SLEEP A WHILE,
IT MAY HAVE A DESTINY FOR US,
IT MAY AGAIN CALL UF FORTH,
IT MAY REALLY HAVE NEED OF US,
IF NOT, WHY DID IT TROUBLE SO MUCH ABOUT US?
WE SHALL SEE.

--LOUIS ZALK
OJAI, CALIFORNIA
1961 1961

"MOSES"

In a bleak wilderness

Of many desolations,

A man trod wearily

Over the desert and the waste places.

He was tall and gaunt

And his robes were torn and dusty,

Yet his face was of granite power and majesty.

The nameless dignity of complete aloneness

Encompassed him.

And in his luminous eyes

There was a haunting mystery

And the passion of a mighty dream.

Lifting his gaze to a barren crag -

One of many -

The man beheld a burning bush --

A bush that burned but was not consumed.

The man paused and stepped back in sheer astonishment.

A voice spoke from that flame

And in it was the essence of all music

And the muted thunder

Rolling forth from endless corridors of power.

It bid this man to a destiny

Significant for all time,

With deathless light even unto this day.

Did this man see a burning bush

That burned but never was consumed?

Or was this undying flame

Within his own heart,

Consuming the dross of human littleness and fears

And making him one with eternity

And its purposes?

Ajar 1961

Lois Falk

GREETINGS 1962

Unless I dip the pen
In my own heart,
And in the mystery within,
It cannot write,
It can only set forth painted figures
On an empty vase --
So I pause in quietude,
And in silence deeper than a dreamless sleep.

Then oft it seems
A torrent surges through the canyons of my heart,
It is rapture,
It is life aflame,
It is creation,
Groping through the chambers of my mind -
It seizes words - images - music,
It shouts - it sings - it is truth,
Casting off the shackles of mere words.

It fashions for itself a silver hammer,
And with a rhythm charged with ardent fire,
It beats upon the portals of your heart,
It seeks beneath the ferment of your mind,
To stir an echo from the sleeping God within.

Do you not feel it
Even though vexation is your first response?
Can you for a moment
Lay aside philosophies of ponderous words,
Ending and beginning in a mighty nothingness?
Can you forget opinions and ideals
Born of mankind's conflict and despair?

Can you for a moment
Even lay aside your creeds,
Which hold but one ray of the limitless,
And listen to the mystery
Which ever dwells within the inner shrine
Of your own being?

Perhaps it has a thing quite new to tell you,
Something rising higher than the blue of heaven,
And flowing out in radiance from the very lips of truth.

Then from the humdrum current of your life
A thing of rapture may be born,
Ringing out with pent-up songs
That none but you can sing,
And creating images of beauty
That you alone can bring to birth.

Ah, then, thereafter you will surely dwell
In shrines of fragrant silence and soft music,
In homes with vistas reaching out to far horizons,
And the ever-constant theme
Of your inmost being
Will hold a muted ecstasy
Even when it dons the robes of sorrow.

,.... Louis Zalk

CROSSROAD 1962

Smothered with words and names, we sit,
Stunned by a mighty torrent
Of things -- awesome things, frightening things --
Sweeping by us - yes, at our feet.

Names and words alone
Have hidden from us
The full, the dreaded import of these things.
The rolling carpet of our knowledge
Adorned with jewels of glory and of power
Is yet skin deep,
And reveals only in faint measure
A far greater mystery,
The unplumbed being of ourselves,
Which in action or in want of action
Has brought us to this brink
Of limitless catastrophe.

Is the answer bound up
With the orbit of Arcturus
Or what holds Orion
So firmly on his way
Through the timeless aeons of his flight --
Or does it lie within the heart of man himself?

We know it now seems certain
Man will reach the stars --
And voyage on through vast immensities;
That the boundaries of time
Will merge in shadowed stages
Into new dimensions of experience
As space reluctantly withdraws
To leave a fracture open in the wall of Time.

Yes, there will be a space Leif Ericson,
And some new winged Columbus
Will leave safe harbors of the Known
And, goaded by the hunger
Of his imprisoned spirit,
Will dare a journey on a cosmic sea
To seek and find new glorious realms,
Perhaps again far different
Than any that are imaged by the mind of man.

Is this then a wonder to you?
But, is it not a greater wonder
That a worm writhes from an earth tunnel
And, casting off dead skins of countless ages,
Stands up and is a man?
Confused he is and anguished;
Yet, still he is a man
With a fire in his brain
And a torment in his bosom.

What was it cast this blaze of glory o'er his being?
What was it put the lightening in his hand?
What was it gave him power
Torn from the mighty Sun itself?

What mighty atom was it in this worm
That wrought upon him through the ages,
So that now he has become a god
Who claims the cosmos
For a field in which to play?

Yet now he stands enlarged by ever new horizons --
Searing flashes of transcendent glory
Break through the thought barriers
Fashioned of his dark and bloody past;
Now he measures spacial distances
Not in miles, but in light years.

Will science as a celestial detergent
Cleanse from his soul
The stain of littleness
And of his self-enclosing darkness?
Mindful of the nameless glory at his call,
Will he expand its power
Into ever widening measures of creative joy,
With changeless harmony and peace --
The basic blocks with which to build?

Or will he in a madness
Torn by wounds of unforgiving darkness
Saturate with hate and fear,
Choose the way of agony
And the final ending of his race?

There is, there yet must be this higher way,
For equally and even more
He now can seek the hidden realms within himself,
Find undreamed worlds -
Yes, galaxies and constellations of the spirit
As he turns then from immensities of space
To inner and profounder deeps of understanding.

May not the worlds within worlds of inner comprehension
Reveal the utter, the unbreakable unity of man --
So that he must forever know,
Not in faith but as undying truth,
That the weal and woe of each
Makes up the substance of the all?
May he not then in a knowledge indestructible
Find in love righteousness
The perfect action of enlightened being?

Yes, this can be the last
And most glorious conversion,
The experience not measurable
By the outer ferment of the mind;
When what he has of form,
Purified, beauteous and exalted,
Becomes in each a holy grail
Holding and overflowing
With the eternal, the undivided essence --
The Root which surges mightily through all that lives.

Then he may in undreamed harmony
Claim kinship with the stars --
Speaking, singing and ever creating
New forms of glory --
In a Peace which ever renews itself in joy
And in a radiance which knows not death.

Or will he in persistent hate
Build towers satanic to the skies,
And die amid the cosmic thunderbolts
Of his own creation?

This, then, is the Crossroad of all the Ages.....

He must choose!

... Louis Zalk
Ojai 1962

Concept of the

CHRIST

They quarrel over the mystery of my birth --
When with the few and broken fragments of their minds
They cannot even understand
The mystery of their own birth.

The divine birth took place
When, through a bleak and fathomless aloneness
and through a wasteland of much sorrow,
I reached the peak of my own nothingness,
And the understanding of a truth too deep for words or thought
Overshadowed me.
I had but to stand completely aside
And let God speak through the Me that was.

When thus the way was cleared for Him,
Then He it was -- not I -- who calmed the storm;
He it was who healed the sick;
He it was who commanded Lazarus
To leave his house of death and go forth as a living man;
He it was who never died,
But only cast aside the mantle that He wore
Torn by hands that wrought in darkness and in fear.

He it was who spoke with love so vast --
It still could save the world
If men would only drink of it and live
And then go forth beyond the walls
Of their numerous theologies and creeds,
Free of the crutches of their many doctrines,
Beyond philosophies engaged in deadly combat,
And forever know themselves as one.

And now I pause to say unto you:
I am but the trumpet of His voice,
The harp strings of His mighty music --
For still He ever speaks to those of open heart.

Learn then to wholly stand aside
And in a stillness void of self
So that He may be born in you.
Stand aside, and He will speak through you
And a new beauty will then flow through your eyes;
New miracles of creative work
Will blossom from your hands;
Love, sweet as the dawn,
Will radiate from your being;
And the illusion of death -- like an old and worn-out garment --
Will fall away from you forever.

--- Louis Zalk

March 1963

SILENCE AND SOUND

My hill is wrapped in silence
Which falls to such deep realms
That sound and silence are as naught,
And both are one.

I move through strange enchanted glades
Where dreams of unborn beauty
Hover over minds
That in torment strive to give them form.

Yet, there is no darkness;
The heart beholds what eyes cannot see.
There is a gentle radiance older than the stars -
A light as when the dawn in tenderness
Still sleeps within the dew of countless flowers.

Afar off sounds a vast celestial symphony,
In tides that sweep as does a mighty flood
Of surpassing sweetness and melodious thunder
Down the profound abyss of time and space.

And this music holds in mingled glory
All the agony and tragic mystery,
The pain - the wonder, and all the loveliness of life,
A fullness wherein life and music are as one,
Both flowing on through conflict and through sorrow,
Through sweetness and through fleeting joys,
Gathering to an end so high in exaltation
That man in truth knows kinship with the Gods.

Can it be that those of earth's composers,
Unhampered now by bodies wracked with want and pain,
Have united to create this rapturous stream of sound
So that all things born will listen and rejoice;
And those who yet do fear to enter life
Will dare the perilous gates of birth,
And those who have died will in ecstatic memory
Leave the scented bowers of their heaven
And through the sacred channel of this music
Enter to embrace their loved ones still on earth?

..... Louis Zalk

LOUIS ZALK
P. O. BOX 647
OJAI, CALIFORNIA

What saith the High and Lofty One
That inhabiteth Eternity,
Yet dwelleth also in the heart of man?
"If thou wilt be a Tabernacle for my Light,
And a Chalice for my Being--
I will be as a swift mountain stream
Cleansing thy heart and mind
Of all their vanities.
And thy words shall be laden with truth,
And thy silence will be as a healing balm;
And the rooted grief within thy heart
Become an everlasting music.
I will provide a table for thee
With food that is not dipped in sorrow;
Where there shall be neither One who gives
Or One who receives,
But only those who share--
As Brethren dwelling together in Unity.
For there I shall command my blessing,
Even Life Forevermore."

my dear Jean + Jim —
Since you also are
my dear friends
this letter should
be addressed also
to you so
that you
be warned
with affection
Louis

A CONFIDENTIAL LETTER TO A FRIEND

My friend -
Beware of me -
I am not what I seem,
For often have I quaffed a strange drink
Distilled of moonbeams
And the haunting fragrance of the night.
In part, as in a dream
I walk knee deep, amid a wilderness
Of star eyed flowers,
And from a Silence robed in Beauty's very self -
A note smites deep within me -
Bringing with it all the songs that ever were
Or are, or ever can be -
Leaving me with a hunger, never to be stilled.
Yes, I will speak to you of business -
Of the weather -
Of the casual routine of existence -
Of politics and of the world danger and confusion,
But all the while within my heart
A sweet torment burns, for which there is no cure.
And really I would rather speak to you
In words not quite considered sane -
Longing to take you with me,
On endless pathways thru the silent stars,
So we both may hear the heart-beats of eternity,
And in nameless rapture to behold,
The Cosmic Forges of innumerable creations,
Flaming with the dust of worlds, long dead,
And casting forth in molten incandescence,
The nuclei of systems
And endless systems within systems
Of Universes and worlds yet to be.

Sincerely,

Louis Zalk

P.S.
But yet my friend
Perhaps you care not for my magic drink,
Or for my stars and constellations,
But would rather in the cozy comfort
Of a darkened living room,
Ponder on the nature of light -
Which obeys your call
Just by touching an electric switch.